Mid - Florida Atari Computer Club Bulletin

April, 1995

Vol. 12, No. 4

This is the monthly bulletin of the Mid-Florida Atari Computer Club. In it are articles written or submitted by members who feel they are of interest to all users of Atari computers.

You may wish to join a computer club to share the beneficial aspects of having others around you who have similar machines, like interests, and a desire to share what they know with others. A users group can help you understand things about your computer that they have already discovered.

Our membership, at $12.00 per year, entitles you to the newsletter, access to the disk libraries, and club meetings where all the fun and education happen on a monthly basis.

We meet in the Orlando Library building downtown Orlando, 101 E Central Blvd. At 1:30PM on the second Sunday of each month. Feel free to join us there next month to learn more about the wonderful world of computers, and Atari computers in particular.

For Newsletter Exchange

M.F.A.C.C.
C/O Bob Smith
3729 Yosemite Dr.
Orlando, FL 32818

M.F.A.C.C. Affiliated BBS Listing:

Top Gun	381-5403
Starbase 1	381-2610
Inner Core	294-5183
Lear-Sparks Midi	786-0239

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Mid-Florida Atari Computer Club

From the President

Here we are at one of more busy months of the year.

Why, you say???

Good question and I have some answers.... It is busy because of Taxes, The Republican Contract with America, Robert Raymond will be at a meeting, Bill Baker will do his world famous Bugs Bunny routine, Gale Kindstrom will make everybody some beer, I will be my usual sweet and lovable self, the nominations of national officers for our national club, John Baker will not be at a meeting, the announcement by Bill Baker that he and his family will be joining a monastery, the world will end on April 1st at 4:00AM and Robert Raymond will disagree and he will announce that he is no longer using a bicycle and has joined B.A. (that might be bicycle anonymous or maybe something else), ETC. There, I believe I have answered your question.

What has the foregoing to do with this month? Well, if you look REAL CLOSE you will see some items that will happen at this month's meeting.

Now on to another subject; THE ANNUAL FLOPPY AWARDS!!!!

1- For best supporting Club Member in a Librarian Environment:

The Disk Envelope Please.....AND THE WINNER IS: JEFF POTTER!!!

2- For best secretarial legs in shorts:

The Disk Envelope Please.....AND THE WINNER IS: ROBERT RAYMOND!!!

3- For best behind the scenes Newsletter producer and Mead Maker:

The Bottle Please.....AND THE WINNER IS: GALE KINDSTROM!!!

4- For best annoyance at a Club Meeting:

The Disk Envelope Please.....AND THE

WINNER IS: ROY R.....!!!

5- For best alltime treasurer and dinner provider:

The Moneybag Please.....AND THE WINNER IS: BILL BAKER!!!

6- For the Best ATARI DEALER:

The Disk Envelope Please.....AND THE WINNER IS: MORRISON'S COMPUTERS!!!

7- For best Club Sponsored BBS:

The Password Please.....AND THE WINNER IS: A THREE WAY TIE!!!

8- For Most Service to The Club with a SMILE OR GAS:

The Tums Please.....AND THE WINNER IS: ALL BOARD MEMBERS EXCEPT THE PRESIDENT!!!

9- For The Annual STEALTH Award By A Board Member:
The Missing Envelope Please...AND THE WINNER IS: JOHN BAKER!!!!

10- For the Nicest People Award:
The Nice Envelope Please.....AND THE WINNER IS: OUR CLUB MEMBERS!!!

As Mel Allen used to say "How about that"!!!

More from the president on page 5...

Minutes Of The M.F.A.C.C. General Meeting

Minutes for the MFACC
March 12th, 1995

The meeting began at 14:55.

OLD BUSINESS

It was revealed that the monthly phone calls were not issued, and none of the members of that committee were at the meeting. Do you think something happened to them?

Bob reviewed the Demos that were going to be run that meeting - his own ST management program, and a music/graphics demo by Jeff Potter.

NEW BUSINESS

A nominations committee is needed in order to press-gang members into the club's officer cadre. Watch for them wandering around back alleys armed with clubs. Jim Peach and Gail Kinstrome will form this committee. Nominations will be next month, voting the month after that.

May's normal meeting occurs on Mother's day. Since we all love our mothers, the meeting will be moved forward one week.

Dave Stienburg joined our bold ranks, having recently picked up a lot of Atari's in a thrift shop. Welcome Dave!

The meeting was closed at 15:17.

Some phone numbers you will need to communicate with our club:

President:
Bob Smith ☛ 299-5374

Vice-President:
John Baker ☛ 823-9705

Treasurer:
Bill Baker ☛ 277-3438

Secretary:
Robert Raymond ☛ 896-7404

Librarians:
8-Bit:
Jeff Potter

ST:
Bob Smith ☛ 299-5374

Publicity:
☛

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Treasurer's Report
March, 1995

Opening balance of	621.82
Deposit	00.00
Debit	00.00
Service Charge	10.00
Closing balance	611.82

Birthdays for April

Richard Fowler
Tom Smith
John Baker

All welcomed as new members.

David Steinberg

May 95: Nominations Published ~ Renewals
June 95: ONLY paid members vote in Elections
Possible outside presentation.

3 single density drives complete $10 each
Large selection of new & used software, games utilities etc. Start mags with disks $1 each.
SM124 St monochrome monitor $75
Hard drive boxes & power supplies $50@
See Bob Smith or call 299-5374

Now just a serious closing:

I had the pleasure of visiting with John Morrison a few days ago and we discussed the state of his business. John has informed me that not one member, (except for myself) has supported him in anyway in recent months. Quite frankly, he is very down on the Club population and he is entirely right. WE DON'T SUPPORT the only ATARI DEALER within 400 miles. I guess I am embarrassed for the Club and have no answer. This is for each to decide, but, think about buying something from him, if you want to, otherwise, we may not have a Morrison's Computer.. Finally, thanks in advance to everyone who will renew on time....

MORRISON COMPUTERS
ORLANDO, FLORIDA

3761 SILVER STAR RD. ORLANDO, FLORIDA (407)295-6340

AUTHORIZED ATARI SALES AND SERVICE

OVER 250 SOFTWARE TITLES!
COMPONENT LEVEL 8-BIT, 16 BIT ATARI, IBM, C64 REPAIRS
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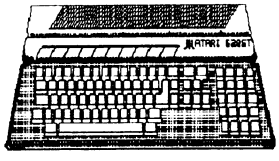
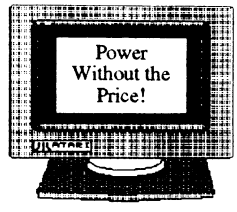
New R/C Aerochopper ST/PC/MAC $225.00
Complete Selection of ST Books and European Mags



The Falcon has LANDED!!!



Senate Unveils Telecom Bill

The U.S. Senate Commerce Committee has approved by a vote of 17-2 a proposal that would drastically change the nation's 60-year-old telecommunications laws, lifting many restrictions on telephone and cable companies.

Associated Press writer Jeannine Aversa reports from Washington, D.C. that the measure would free telephone and cable companies to enter businesses previously off-limits.

Those in favor of the changes say the new freedom would give companies incentives to build competing networks that could transmit voice, video, and data, driving prices down and giving consumers morechoices. However, critics insist companies with monopoly power would prevent others from competing.

A last-minute compromise to the bill would require local telephone companies to abide by slightly tougher conditions before entering the long-distance business.

The cable compromise would maintain rate regulation on the lowest tier of service, which generally consists of broadcast signals, access channels, and a few cable networks until local competition develops. It would also deregulate rates for all other program services unless a cable company's rates exceeded the national average, notes AP.

ATARI AND ACCLAIM JOIN FORCES IN MAJOR SOFTWARE DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT

Sunnyvale, CA, March 22, 1995 -- Atari Corporation (ASE:ATC) and Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. (NASDAQ:AKLM) are proud to announce an agreement which will bring the most popular contemporary video game titles to the 64-bit Atari Jaguar Multimedia system. The new alliance includes three stellar Acclaim titles that Atari will distribute:

* NBA Jam - Tournament Edition - planned release: fourth quarter, 1995

* Frank Thomas 'Big Hurt' Baseball - planned release: fourth quarter, 1995.

* The third title will be announced later this year for release in early 1996.

"Atari's focus will continue to be to deliver great software on the world's best video game system available. The agreement with Acclaim is substantial milestone in our commitment to the Jaguar gamer," stated Sam Tramiel, CEO of Atari Corporation. "We are delighted to work with Acclaim and to include these titles in the expanding library of Jaguar sports and action games."

NBA Jam - Tournament Edition With more than 100 NBA players, cross-court slam dunks, new codes and secret characters, Jaguar gamers will not only play basketball, they'll feel it with this fast-paced action experience that features incredible graphics.

Frank Thomas 'Big Hurt' Baseball Two-time MVP. Frank Thomas headlines this innovative title that will feature Thomas' actual baseball movementsusing Acclaim's motion capture technology.

Atari Corporation markets interactive multimedia entertainment systems and software including Jaguar, the world's first and only 64-bit system, and the only video game system manufactured in the United States. Atari is headquartered at 1196 Borregas Avenue, Sunnyvale, California 94089.

Acclaim Entertainment, Inc. with offices in Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Spain and the United Kingdom, is a leading worldwide entertainment publisher of software and peripherals for major video game hardware systems, personal computer and CD-ROM software, coin-operated arcade games, and comic books. Acclaim also operates motion capture and blue screen studios and A.D.I., a global sales and distribution company for products from a variety of entertainment publishers, including Acclaim, Digital Pictures and Marvel Software. Acclaim, which recently formed a new company with Tele-Communications, Inc. is publicly traded on the NASDAQ National Market System under the Symbol AKLM.

Continued on following page

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ATARI ANNOUNCES MASS MARKET PRICE FOR 64-BIT JAGUAR

Sunnyvale. Calf. (March 21, 1995) -- Atari Corporation today announced that the 64-Bit Jaguar Interactive Multimedia system will have a suggested retail price of under $160. This Atari Jaguar system will be called the "64-Bit Power Kit" and includes the Jaguar console, a controller, power adapter and video cable (game cartridge not included). "64-Bit Power Kit" packages will be specially marked to highlight the "Mega-Power, Maximum Value" that the new price point represents.

"With this new Jaguar price, and the great software now available in stores-- with more to come-- the Atari Jaguar will lead the next generation of video games into the homes of America. This price puts the 64-Bit Jaguar within the grasp of a broad market looking for the most advanced system at an affordable price," said Sam Tramiel, President of Atari.

Technological advances have allowed Atari to take this aggressive pricing action, as the cost of components has been reduced through a planned chip set integration and further design advances.

Tramiel further stated, "We are very excited to provide these great values, and look forward to strong sales for both the 64-Bit Jaguar Hardware and Jaguar software.The current library includes such major hits as 'Tempest 2000', 'Alien Vs. Predator', 'Doom', 'Troy Aikman Football', 'Val D'Isere Skiing' and 'Iron Soldier'. As the Jaguar software library increases with great titles like 'Fight For Life', 'Hover Strike', 'Rayman' and 'Super Burnout', we expect solid hardware sales growth. Our Retail Dealers are equally excited about the new pricing, and anticipate that a broad base of consumers will rush to the store to buy the Jaguar."

To launch the new Jaguar unit, Atari will deliver a targeted marketing campaign to build awareness of the new Jaguar system value and the great current games (and pending new titles). Advertising is scheduled to commence in the spring. Special in store merchandising materials have been developed to reinforce the Mega-Power/Maximum Value message and encourage the consumer to "Do the Math".

Atari Corporation markets the Jaguar, the world's first and only 64-Bit interactive multimedia entertainment system. Atari is headquarters at 1196 Borregas Avenue, Sunnyvale, California 94089.

Key Issues

Irreconcilable Differences

by Robert Raymond

In our last episode, hero, that young, dashing programmer about town, had just purchased a new PC computer. A decade ago, when I had purchased my ST, it was nothing more to set up than to take it out of the box, hook it up, and run it. In ten years, things could only get better, no?

"Mouse Driver Not Found".

Hmmm. Lets see. The driver IS there; I found it, after a long search, in the DOS directory. The config systems point to it and run it as well.

Lets load it back in off of the disk. Dash it all! The driver is on a 5" disk, and my machine only takes 3" disks. A quick run to work to copy across disks, and another reload of the driver. Hmmm. The old one and the new one took up different amounts of space. Could that be it? Reboot!

Nope.

Finally, my brother, the PC wiz, stops in. The problem, he tells me, is a dead mouse (the first thing that the software does is to check for a mouse. If none is found, it calls it dead, and dosn't load the driver. So the driver is 'not found'). A second trip to work to borrow a mouse confirms this.

With borrowed mouse in palm, I can finally play that neat new game, Dawn Patrol, right? Well, yes, except for the fact that my video driver is so new that Patrol does not support it yet. So I get to wait a week, so that they can send me a 'low speed (i.e. slow) all-purpose driver'. This works OK, but it makes the planes look so blocky that they look as if they are spilling the beans on a mafia chief on 20/20. And something makes the game lock up from time to time. Of course, there is no way that support can fix it, given the situation, so we are waiting another three weeks for a driver that works with my machine to see if that fixes the problem.

And then my brother's video card blows a chip. Suddenly, one of his games stops working. And since the computer is flexible and he likes to flex it, we spend half a day looking through his computer, trying to figure what he changed that could possibly have made the game not run. Its only later that some third-party diagware points to (or, rather, gestures in the direction of) the problem.

There seems to be something amiss here. Now, rather than a number of uncompatible but stable machines (if the software is available for your machine, it'll run, Q.E.D.), there is now a huge number of 'compatible' machines (all of them using hardware and software components from hundreds of dissimilar companies). Now, a program that you buy might or might not run, depending on a number of factors that you cannot see nor anticipate.

I remember years ago, while contracting as a systems manager for the Navy, we had one of our Dec mainframes go down. The DecRep came out, opened up the back, and pointed to the one non-Dec component. "I can't guarantee anything, what with that alien (his words) component." This feels like the same thing, but on a grand scale.

B.T.W. - I'm writing this on my Atari. After ten years of use, I still use WordPerfect. At least I know what's going on here. And now, the usual disclaimer from our editor. Bob?

(Editor's note: Yes, this is the usual disclaimer and while the editor may agree or disagree, this column by the esteemed author reflects his thoughts and opinions and not necessarily that of the newsletter staff, officers or the official policy of the Mid-Florida Atari Computer Club. The Newsletter staff thanks the author for his usual fine contributions, as they are very well written.)

WHEN ROBERT RAYMOND SPEAKS, ALL MEMBERS LISTEN, AND HE SAYS:

RENEW YOUR

MEMBERSHIP DUES!

THE JAGUAR SECTION

You know, speculation can be entertaining, and devastating. We all know that the Jaguar's CD-player and a group of games will be coming out soon. Atari has been pretty open that there will be a CD pack-in, when the hardware arrives. What's been amazing is that there have been numerous rumors trying to figure out what game will come with the player. The comments, sometimes heated, have been bandied about for months!

With the Jaguar, we got Cybermorph. Regardless of how you felt about that game (I think it's great!), the game was included in the price of the system. The same will hold true for the CD-player. So what if the game might be Blue Lightning or Dragon's Lair, or something else? These are good games, and good choices, for many. Users (and potential buyers) have stated pros and cons about these possible games being included in the deal. You can't please everybody, but like Cybermorph, you will please many.

There's one potential CD game being considered as the pack-in, among the reported six to be available. That game is VidGrid. Many of you may not know what this game is, so let me summarize it for you. VidGrid is reminiscent of those "slider" puzzle games that we all have seen when we were kids. You know the ones I mean. These are the flat, square plastic toys that usually contained sliding tiles, usually fifteen (each one being numbered 1 through 15), with one empty space allowing the player the ability to slide each tile, one space at a time. The object of the game was to move the tiles around so that you ended up with the tiles in numerical order: 1 - 4 on the top row, 5 - 8 on the second row, 9 - 12 on the third row, and 13 - 15 on the bottom row. This took some time and strategy to achieve, and it was fun.

Well, the Jaguar will take this game into the 90's. Not only will you have to move "tiles" around, but instead of numbers or letters, you'll have to form a picture. Add to that is the fact that each "tile" has music "attached" to it so that as the tiles are moved around, they'll also play back a tune according to the order of the tiles. Some tiles will be facing backwards, upside down, etc.; and the music will play accordingly. Who knows what pictures will appear once you have them in order, but that's unimportant at this point. The puzzle game sounds somewhat entertaining, but not something I'd think I'd want as a leading-edge Jaguar 64-bit CD game.

What is important, and something that I think Atari needs to hear from all of us, is that there hasn't been a single message online that gives me the impression that anyone wants this game, regardless of the fact that it's a free pack-in! Sure, I don't get online on every service available to me; nor do I read every single message on those that I do. However, the messages that I have seen have ALL been negative toward this game being possibly considered as the pack-in.

This is not ..a some like it, some don't kind of thing. This is the kind of message that's saying: "I don't want it even if it's free!" Atari has to listen to this feedback. VidGrid sounds like a no-brainer non-seller type of game. It might be cute, and turn out to have some appeal for some once they play it. However, it doesn't have the kind of appeal that would convince me that this is the kind of

game that I'd expect to see showing off the Jaguar's CD capabilities.

I want the CD to show me the next generation of superb games. I want to see great graphics, great game-play, and mind-boggling fun! I don't want to see potential customers, or current users, see a CD game come out as the pack-in that's been generating negative feedback BEFORE it's even out! Can you imagine what kind of potential negativity will be generated once it's out?

Atari: listen to the feedback on this potentially disastrous decision. Bring the game out, but let the customers give their feedback at the cash register. To the users, I'd suggest that if you have bad vibes about this game and the decision to possibly include it as the pack-in - let Atari know about it. Drop them e-mail about it. If you want, send me your e-mail (at dpj@delphi.com) and I'll pass it along to the right people, for you. Make your voices heard.

> Jaguar Catalog STR InfoFile - What's currently available, what's coming out.

Current Available Titles

CAT #	TITLE	MSRP	DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER
J9000	Cybermorph	$59.99	Atari Corp.
J9006	Evolution:Dino Dudes	$49.99	Atari Corp.
J9005	Raiden	$49.99	FABTEK, Inc/Atari Corp.
J9001	Trevor McFur/ Crescent Galaxy	$49.99	Atari Corp.
J9010	Tempest 2000	$59.95	Llamasoft/Atari Corp.
J9028	Wolfenstein 3D	$69.95	id/Atari Corp.
JA100	Brutal Sports FtBall	$69.95	Telegames
J9008	Alien vs. Predator	$69.99	Rebellion/Atari Corp.
J9029	Doom	$69.99	id/Atari Corp.
J9036	Dragon: Bruce Lee	$59.99	Atari Corp.
J9003	Club Drive	$59.99	Atari Corp.
J9007	Checkered Flag	$69.99	Atari Corp.
J9012	Kasumi Ninja	$69.99	Atari Corp.
J9042	Zool 2	$59.99	Atari Corp
J9020	Bubsy	$49.99	Atari Corp
J9026	Iron Soldier	$59.99	Atari Corp
J9060	Val D'Isere Skiing	$59.99	Atari Corp.
	Cannon Fodder	$69.99	Virgin
	Syndicate	$69.99	Ocean
	Troy Aikman Ftball	$69.99	Williams
	Theme Park	$69.99	Ocean

Available Soon

CAT #	TITLE	MSRP	DEVELOPER/PUBLISHER

CatBox	$69.95	ICD
Hover Strike	$59.99	Atari
Jaguar CD-ROM	$149.99	Atari

Hardware and Peripherals

CAT #	TITLE	MSRP	MANUFACTURER
J8001	Jaguar (complete)	$189.99	Atari Corp.
J8001	Jaguar (no cart)	$159.99	Atari Corp.
J8904	Composite Cable	$ 19.95	
J8901	Controller/Joypad	$ 24.95	Atari Corp.
J8905	S-Video Cable	$ 19.95	

(Editor's note: This is reprinted from ST Report, issue #1112.)

The 130XE/320K Upgrade

by Scott Peterson

After both reading and building both the 800/288K upgrade(D.G.Byrd), and the 800XL/256K upgrade(C.Buchholz), I decided that there also had to be a way to upgrade the 130XE. There is, and thanks to the "Freddie" chip(CO61991) this modification is much easier to do than either of the other upgrades.

To do the upgrade you will need a soldering iron, de-soldering tool, and some fine wire. See the parts list for the chips needed.

First, remove both the case and the metal shield to get down to the mother-board. Then remove the eight ram-chip U26 thru U33(MT4264). They are the row closest to the TV RF module. Next, install Z2 thru Z9 in the place of U23 thru U33. These are the 256K ram-chips. You can solder them to the mother board, or use sockets. Now take a piece of wire approx 12 in. long and run a jumper from pin one on each of the 256K ram-chips to the next. After you do this the wire will be connected to pin 1 on Z2 thru Z9 and you should have about 6 inches left over. Do this on the rear of the mother board and then snake the wire thru the large hole near the ram chips.

Next, desolder and remove U23(CO14795), and replace it with a 40 pin socket. Bend up pins 15 and 16 on U23 and insert it in the socket you just installed. Take Z1(74LS158) and bend up all the pins on it except pins 8 and 16. Put this "piggy-back" on top of U20(HD14050) and solder pins 8 and 16 of Z1 to pins 8 and 16 on U20. Now solder a short jumper from pin 15 on Z1 to pin 8 of Z1.

Now, take a piece of wire about 4 in. long solder one end to pin 30 on the chip marked "CO14805" on the mother board, and the other to pin 1 on Z1. Next solder a wire to pin 15(one of the two you bent out) of U23 and connect the other end to pin 2 on Z1. Solder a wire to pin 16 on U23 and connect the other end to pin 3 on Z1.

Take R1(33 ohm) and trim the leads to about 1/4 in. Take the wire you connected to pin one on the 256K ram-chips and solder it to oneend of R1, solder the other end of R1 to pin 4 on Z1. Re-assemble the RF shield and case and you are finished.

PARTS LIST

Z1 74LS158(2 to 1 Multiplexer)
Z2-Z9 41256 dynamic RAM(150ns)
R1 33 ohm 1/4 watt resistor.
1 40 pin socket.
8 16 pin sockets(optional).

The following is a quick over view of the bit table and numbers to be used in location 54017(PORTB). I have finished modifying a ramdisk handler for the extra ram. It uses a ram based OS so basic XE or XL can't be used. At present the best deal for this mod. is to use MYDOS 4.0. This supports a very large single density ramdisk. With basic XE you can use a 1500 sector ramdisk and without it you can have about 2000 sectors.

This upgrade has been built and tested on a BBS, it has run for days on end without a memory loss or error. If you need help or more information feel free to call the Peanut Gallery (408)-384-3906. 24HR, 300/1200 Baud. Leave mail to the Sysop(thats me). Good luck and let me know if you write a better handler.

Memory Control Register 54017($D301)
130XE/320K

Bit 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0 D a b C c d B R

D=0 enable diagnostic ROM.
B=0 enable BASIC ROM.
R=1 enable OS ROM.
C=0 enable extended RAM.
abcd= memory control bits.

Bank #	Control#	
Bank 0	->131	
Bank 1	->135	
Bank 2	->139	
Bank 3	->143	
Bank 4	->163	Basic= off
Bank 5	->167	OS = on
Bank 6	->171	ENH = on
Bank 7	->175	

```
Bank 8 -------->195|
Bank 9 -------->199|
Bank 10 ------->203|
Bank 11 ------->207|
Bank 12 ------->227|<--\
Bank 13 ------->231|   \
Bank 14 ------->235|   / 130XE Banks
Bank 15 ------->239|<--/
-------------------
```

If you are using MYDOS 3.016 and wish to use Basic XE and a ram-disk at the same time, boot DOS and poke 5275,163 and 5324,16. Go to DOS and write the new DOS. This will keep the two from "bumping" into each other. A similar poke can be done to DOS 2.5, it is poke 4838,163. The handler I have will set up 192K of the extra ramas 2 SD ramdisks or 1 DD ramdisk.

If you are a hot-shot programmer (Im not) I think a print spooler that uses part of this ram would also be very nice. This mod is easy to do and perfect for running a BBS. One note, on compuserve there is a mod by Rich Andrews which should not be confused with this one, his uses 33 new chips and mine uses 9 new chips. Have fun.

Scott Peterson

(Editor's note: The staff of this newsletter has no first hand knowledge of this modification and cannont make any recommendation, one way or the other.)

ST DISK OF THE MONTH

DOCUMENTATION FOR "FDI"

A FLOPPY DISK INDEXING PROGRAM

By Bob Smith

One of the worst problems you can encounter is the drudgery of having to find a disk and what files it contains. There are several very good programs on the market and several contain several features others don't. The program that is featured on the MFACC April Disk of the Month is one such program. This one was chosen for the simplicity, features and the purpose. It is called "FDI", which stands for "FLOPPY DISK INDEXING". Again, simplicity and no frills, even in the name.

OVERVIEW

FDI is a program to help you catalog your library of "floppy" disks and the files that reside on each disk. It does not use windows, drop-down menus, fancy colors, or any of that neat stuff. It does give you a complete index of the files you have, what disks they are on, when they were last updated, and lots of room for descriptions and comments.

SETTING UP

To keep things simple, you should keep your Floppy Disk Index on a disk by itself (or in a folder by itself on a hard disk). A single sided disk will have room for about 1,000 entries. To get started, copy FDI.TOS to an empty disk and double-click on it.

START UP

FDI will not run until it sees a valid system date. If the current system date is not valid, you will be asked to enter the current date, time, and day of week. Use three letter abbreviation for day of week (Mon, Tue, etc.) When all fields are correct press F10 to continue.

When prompted for "Filesystem name" enter the name you wish to assign to your catalog file. This name must start with a letter and be no more than eight characters long. Do not use an extension ("."). If the filesystem you select does not exist on the disk, an empty one will be created. A filesystem consists of three files: the data file with an extension of ".DT" and two index files with extensions of ".NX0" and ".NX1". These three files must be kept together when copied or backed up.

UP AND RUNNING

If you are starting out with an empty filesystem, the first thing to do is Index your first disk (option "I" for Index). CAREFULLY follow the prompts as to when to insert and remove disks from drive A. You should see a new screen:

DISK ID

FDI keeps track of your disks by a four character disk ID. You may use any method you like for assigning these ID's; as a suggestion, I use this:

The first character is a letter indicating the contents or type of programs on the disk (B for BASIC, D for demos, L for LOGO, etc). The next three characters form a number to identify the disk. Therefore, my BASIC disks are labelled B001, B002, etc. My LOGO disks are labelled L001, L002, etc.

The important thing to remember is that no two disks should be given the same ID. If you do not follow this rule, you are guaranteed to lose data. By default, FDI writes the ID you selected to the disk being indexed. If you do not wish to write that Disk ID on that disk, enter "n" in the field "Write ID to disk". If you allow FDI to write the ID to the disk it will write a file called "DISKID.QQQ" onto the disk. Whenever the disk is re-cataloged later, you will not be promted for the disk ID again. When the Disk ID screen is complete, press F10 to continue.

MAIN SCREEN

Most of the options on the main screen are fairly self-explanarory (or safe to experiment with). However, some may need explanation:

Add -- This option will allow you to manually add a filename/disk to your catalogue. This may be used to index non-standard or copy-protected disks. Fill in the information on the screen. The F10 Function key will complete the 'add' option and return you to the bottom menu.

Beginning of file -- Choosing this option will take you to the beginning of the file. The 'beginning' of file will be dependent upon the prime index you are in (where the asterisk is located).

Delete this record -- The record that is currently displayed will be deleted. You will be prompted at the bottom of the screen - "Are you sure you want to delete this record?" Input "Y" if you are sure. Input "N" if you do not want to delete this record.

End of File -- This selection will take you to the end of your file (according to your current index) and will display that record.

Find -- This will allow you to "Find" a Disk name or Filename. You do not need to enter the full name you are searching for. For example, if your current index is "file name" and you enter "m", you will see the first file that begins with "m". If you enter "me", you will see the first file that begins with "me".

Index -- With this option you should follow the instructions in the "Up and Running" and "Disk ID" sections. You will use this selection whenever you need to read a new disk or read/index a modified disk to catalogue in this program. Carefully follow the prompts when swapping disks.

List -- When you choose this option you will get another screen with Disk ID, File name, File Description, Date last modified, Time, and Size of the file. The options, which are presented on the bottom of the screen are: Next Page, Previous Page, UP ARROW, DOWN ARROW, and F10 to select. If you wish to select a particular file/record from the List screen, use any of the above selections to get the cursor there, and press F10. That record will then display on the screen.

Next Entry -- This option will display the next record in the file, according to the current index.

Output to printer -- Printing will start at the record currently selected and continue until end of file or until you press the 'Q' key. The report is sorted by file name or by disk ID, depending on the current index.

Previous Entry -- This selection will allow you to view the previous entry of your records. As in all Next or Previous fields, it is alpha-based and dependent upon the Prime Index you have chosen.

Quit this program -- This will take you back to the GEM Desktop.

Switch prime index -- As you travel foreward or backward thru your files you see entries in sequence by either file name (the default) or by disk ID. The sequence ("current index") is shown by the "*" next to the field name. You can change the current index by pressing "s".

Update this entry -- With this selection, you will be able to modify or add to any of the fields that are present in the displayed record. A frequent use of this selection would be after indexing a disk - you might want to type in descriptions of the files.

View Disk Directory -- With this selection, you will see 'Closing' at the bottom of the screen. Following this, you will be prompted to insert the disk you wish View. It will show you the Filename, Date last modified, Time, and Size of each file on that disk.

WARNINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Rule number one is: ALWAYS finish out of this program by using the 'Q' option. DO NOT power off or re-boot while updating; doing so will certainly confuse the database, scramble data, or wreak general havoc.

Rule number two is: ALWAYS keep backups of your filesystem (name.DT, name.NX0, name.NX1). Remember, even if you are updating only one entry, your whole database is subject to loss! As your database expands (and you have more time and effort invested in it) you will want to keep more than one copy.

If your system has enough memory (one meg or more) you may want load your filesystem to a RAM disk for updates. Some of the functions require a lot of disk accesses, and things go much more quickly on a RAM disk (or hard disk).

KEYS ENABLED IN FDI:

Backspace -- This key will move the cursor backwards and at the same time delete the character you Backspace over.

Left Arrow -- This key will move the cursor back (left) from where it is currently positioned. It will not delete or overwrite the characters currently there.

Shift Left Arrow -- This key moves the cursor to the first position in the current field.

Right Arrow -- This key will move the cursor forward (to the right) from where it is currently positioned, without deleting the characters is it going over.

Shift Right Arrow -- This key moves the cursor to the last position in the current field.

Insert -- When you depress the Insert Key it will allow you to "Insert" a character in the positon of the cursor.

Space Bar -- This key will overtype the characters that are 'spaced over'with the space bar.

Clr Home -- This key will clear the contents of the entire field that are you currently in.

Return -- The Return key will move the cursor to the next input field.

Up Arrow -- This key moves the cursor to the previous field.

F10 -- The F10 function key generally finishes out of the current screen and/or enters the data into the file.

Delete -- The Delete key will allow you to delete the character(s) that are positioned at the cursor.

UNDO -- The UNDO key allows you to leave an update screen without changing the data in your file.

Well, that's about it for this month and Comments and suggestions are welcomed about the usage of this program. The original program and information was written by Rod Waener.

Atari Web Pages Latest News

Version 1.0

Date 27/2/95

by

Mark Stephen Smith

4th Update

Foreword

Hello and welcome to the news item on the Atari Web pages. This document will describe the Atari Web pages as provided by Mark Stephen Smith and will include a list of the latest updates for the month. Each month I hope to update this text with the very latest additions and news on the Atari Web pages.

Hopefully these pages will provide an invaluable service to their users, but they are still at an early stage and developing all the time. As such any feedback and support you may have for these pages is more than welcome, it is in fact encouraged. The more input I get from its users the better, as then I will know what is good and bad about these pages and can change them appropriately in the hope of increasing their value to their readers.

Now on with the show.

News and Changes

Well since the original description a lot has happened. I'm now involved in several projects, and submit work to several Internet and diskmag sources for inclusion. I have also officially took over the maintenance of the Atari FTP list from Hallvard Tangeraas of which there have been a couple of updates.

New items in this document since the last copy will be marked with **, updates will be marked with a U. All new items are also listed below according to the date they were added.

The new items this month are:

27/2/95 -- Towers II : Plight of the Stargazer Update!
27/2/95 -- Falcon Owners Group Magazine No.8.
23/2/95 -- Atari FTP List Update
22/2/95 -- HENSA Atari TOS Newsletter Volume 8. No.4
22/2/95 -- HENSA Atari Falcon Newsletter Volume 8. No.2
22/2/95 -- HENSA Atari MiNT Newsletter Volume 8. No.2
22/2/95 -- MIDI Grid Review by Andy Curtis
8/2/95 -- Utopus Two player shootem' up (STE) 231K
8/2/95 -- Downloadable files in Falcon/ST sections now have file sizes listed
7/2/95 -- Hyper Image pages link (contains Hover Hunter news)
7/2/95 -- Mail to me directly using this link
7/2/95 -- New inlined Atari logo for Web pages by Frank Charlton
7/2/95 -- AEO Newsletter Volume 4. Issue.2 in text and ZIP format
6/2/95 -- Pinball Dreams and Llama Zap Falcon News
6/2/95 -- News and Announcements section added
6/2/95 -- HENSA Atari TOS Newsletter Volume 8. No.3
2/2/95 -- Lynx FAQ updated
2/2/95 -- Jaguar FAQ updated
2/2/95 -- Connect Review by Frank Charlton
2/2/95 -- Zero 5 Review by Frank Charlton
1/2/95 -- Atari FTP List Update
31/1/95 -- AtariNOS FAQ
30/1/95 -- CAIN Newsletter Volume 2. No.1

What are the Atari Web pages?
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These are a collection of pages covering all formats of the Atari. In these pages may be found the latest news, reviews, software for downloading, and various other information and links to other places of interest to Atari users.

I have tried to make the structure of these pages easy to follow and as intuitive as possible but there is still a lot of work to be done yet.

How do I access them and what is the Web?
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First of all I shall look at what the Web is or to use its full name the World Wide Web. The Web is new way of accessing the Internet, unlike previous methods where you were required to enter commands into the program you were using the Web uses a more user driven method of getting around the Internet. This method is much more graphical than former methods and as such is much easier to get to grips with.

When using a Web browser (the name given to a program used to access Web pages) the control method usually consists of a point and click operation. A Web page will consist of text and graphics which are sometimes highlighted in some way to indicate that they are selectable and link to more information or a particular piece of data.

Such a link is referred to as a hyperlink. In fact the whole system is a variation on hypertext and uses a script to create each page. Each script is written to a HTML (HyperText Markup Language) standard which contains the main body of text in the page and a few command tags for the browser as to how to format the page and what to do with links, etc.

Web pages may contain text, graphics, sounds, and animations, although the later two are normally supported through external software. It is also possible using the Web to gain access to newsgroups, ftp sites, and gopher services all through the one program. As such this makes this a very powerful tool for Internet access, and coupled with its ease of use this has suddenly became the big thing in the recent Internet explosion into the media.

Browsers can handle all properly written HTML scripts but may vary in operation when scripts are incorrect or contain mistakes. Browsers can be divided into to distinct types, graphical and text only. Popular graphical browsers include NCSA's Mosaic and the recent new browser NetScape. On the text side Lynx is the most popular textual browser (NOTE: text browsers don't show any form of graphics).

To access the Web you must either use one of the above mentioned browsers on a machine such as a Sun, PC or Macintosh, or if you want to access it via your Atari you will need a copy of the Lynx browser as unfortunately there aren't any graphical browsers YET for the Atari.

Next month I will give full details on how to access the Web using the Atari.

Where do I find the Atari Web page?
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From your Web browser choose to open URL and enter the following address:

http://WWW.dl.ac.uk/MISC/ATARI/atari.html

If you can store a hotlist of addresses or something similar on your browser then it may be worth including this address for quick access in the future.

Once you've done that you should see my main page so I hope you enjoy it, and don't forget to write with your thoughts.

What you will find in the Web pages every month.
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From the main menu you have several links available to you, some under miscellaneous and others specific to a particular machine, or collection of machines. It is now possible to mail me directly from the Web pages, special thanks also to Frank Charlton for the new Atari Logo. First I will look at what will be in the Miscellaneous section.

Atari Related links, Documents, FAQ's and Newsletters
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First in the list are "Atari Related Links", these links are to other sources of Atari information or data (such as files, etc.).
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There is a link to many of the major Atari holding FTP sites on the Internet. Links to several Web pages by different people on the Atari. This will grow as worthwhile sites come up. At the moment you can visit:

- HENSA to download Atari files (Moderated by Denesh Bhabuta)
- ZFC's Atari Pages by Annius V. Groenink. This has links to various Atari related places, along with talk of his own work on Edith and his new Drive U Project. Annius is also working on a version of the Mosaic browser for the Atari and the best of luck goes to him on that.
- Christer Gustavsson's Atari Gem Programmers Page. Very useful information for programmers grappling with Gem and the operating system. Also offers help via his questions answers page. Some links can be found to Atari related places. - CAIN Atari Pages. CAIN is the Central Atari Information Network and they create a newsletter which is updated monthly on all things new to do with the Atari. There are also links available here.

- Martin Maisey's Atari Pages. Contains information (downloadable) on programs written by himself for the Atari. Again there are links to other Atari places.
- Toad Computers Pages. Stockiest and retailer of many Atari goods.
- ST Format Pages. Information and previews of ST Format issues.
**Hyper Image Pages. Contains Hover Hunter Jaguar news.

This section will have a page dedicated to it this month as over 30 new Atari related links are added.

Documents
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Useful documents will appear in here. At the moment there is:

- Atari FTP List by Mark Stephen Smith (essential for the latest news on who provides Atari FTP sites).
- Atari TOS Desktop Survival Kit by Thomas J Hopper. An essential guide to getting the most out of your DESKTOP.INF and NEWSDESK.INF files.
- Recommended list of software for the Atari by Denesh Bhabuta. List compiled by Denesh for me of his best software for the Atari (updates coming soon). Mostly PD and Shareware, this list contains links to download most of the software mentioned.
- Information on picture formats by Dave Baggetta. Lots of information on the format of different picture files for the Atari.

FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions)
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Useful FAQ's will appear here. At the moment there is:

- Atari ST SLIP FAQ. This is a guide to connecting your Atari to a network. All you want to know about networks and the Atari.
- Atari CD FAQ. Information on getting and using CD's on the Atari. Regular updates to this can be found in my pages.
- GDOS FAQ by Gerd Castan. Got a question on GDOS then this is the place to look.
- MiNTNet FAQ by Christer Gustavsson. Everything you wanted to know about MiNTNet.
**AtariNOS FAQ by Frank Charlton. Answered questions and information on NOS.

Newsletters
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Although there may be more to come the following newsletters are updated promptly as I receive them. These have been re-organised to make it easier to keep track of. At the moment there is:

- CAIN Newsletter containing the latest Atari news.
- HENSA Newsletter containing the latest updates to the HENSA Atari archive.
- AEO newsletter containing the latest Atari news.

Newsgroups
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Atari related newsgroups. Send updates. The currently supported news are:

comp.binaries.atari.st
comp.sys.atari.advocacy
comp.sys.atari.announce
comp.sys.atari.st
comp.sys.atari.st.tech
comp.sys.atari.programmer
rec.games.video.atari
alt.games.lynx

Questions and Answers
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Submit your questions to here and get them included in this page. Answers are open to anyone who has something valid to say, and help is provided to me on Programming and Music questions by several knowledgeable sources. Please support this section, only by your interaction and questions will it survive. All answers are included in this page for anyone else with the same question and answers are also sent back to the person who submitted the question for those without Web access.

If you feel you have an expertise in a particular area concerning the Atari and would be willing to answer questions on that area when and if I submitted them to you, then please let me know and you can join the team. Programming and Music are fairly well covered and I can cover Graphics programs, help with Technical questions would be appreciated.

Reviews
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Here I hope to include reviews of Atari products both new an old. So far I have the following reviews:

- Kobold review by Andy Curtis (ST Format)
- Flash 2 review by Frank Charlton (ST Format)
- Edith Professional review by Frank Charlton (ST Format)
- MagiC review by Andy Curtis (ST Format)
- Stello v2 review by Mark Stephen Smith (Myself)

- Sportster Modem review by Frank Charlton (ST Format)
- Storm Tracker review by Andy Curtis (ST Format)
**Connect review by Frank Charlton (ST Format)
**Zero 5 review by Frank Charlton (ST Format)
**MIDI Grid review by Andy Curtis (ST Format)

There are several reviews on the way by the above mentioned people as well as some by myself (finishing review of Apex Media for the Falcon). This section is now growing well.

Again if you feel you would like to submit reviews for inclusion then please write to me. Please note these pages don't include Lynx and Jaguar Reviews, as they are contained within their own pages.

**News and Announcements Pages*
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Latest Atari news, and announcements from the Atari World. Currently contains the following:

**Universal Virus Killer Book Announcement

Updates and Information on these Web Pages
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All updates and news on the Atari Web pages goes in here. Previews of what's to come soon are included and new item or updates to the pages are listed according to date with the most recent being first. Most updates contain links to the new material for instant access.

Other things to be found in here are the number of accesses to the Atari pages. Unfortunately the way the logs are now stored prevent me from calculating the number of accesses to these pages in the future.

This now concludes the Miscellaneous section. Now onto the Other Pages. These pages are specific to a particular machine, or collection of machines. These are going to go through some major changes and you can expect a fair number of changes to be made to these in the next month or so.

Falcon Page
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This will contain information and files relevant to the Atari Falcon, currently this page is divided into the following areas:

News and Previews
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In here expect to see any news or previews that come my way, whether they be small descriptions or full features with pictures. At the moment there is:

**Pinball Dreams and Llama Zap News.
- Apex News. This contains some information I got on Apex Media for the Falcon when I

spoke to Douglas Little on the phone a few weeks back. Not very detailed unfortunately, but I'm waiting on my copy of Apex to give a full review so expect that to be rectified soon.
- Dextrous News. Small description of some of the features of Dextrous with a picture. Only at an early stage of development, if I hear more it will go in here.
- Towers II : Plight of the Stargazer. Pictures and description of this great looking Falcon only sequel to Towers. Expect the demo soon.
**Towers II : Plight of the Stargazer Update! The latest news on developments.

- Newsletters from HENSA on Falcon section of archive.

Misc ~~~~

Miscellaneous information on the Falcon, including:

- Falcon Demo FAQ. List of Demos for the Falcon, including some form of information on each.
- Compatibility list of games with Falcon.
- Compatibility list of applications with Falcon.
- Falcon Specifications and Information compiled by Rod McCall.

New Software
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The latest Falcon/enhanced software available for download. Major revisions to be done with updates here. All files now list there size so you can see how large they are before downloading. At the moment the following software is included, with more to come:

- Super Bomber Man (freeware)
- Ply mpeg v0.70 by M.D.Griffiths (shareware)
- Speed of Light v3.5 (shareware picture viewer)
- Scape a planetary landscape generator.
- Digital Tracker demo of commercial version.
- Obsession 1 level demo.
- FOG issue 8 diskmagazine for Falcon.

Other software worth having
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Software worth using on the Falcon.

- Backward v2.52. For compatibility with the ST. Please send any versions which are newer than this.
- MultiBlow. Configurable overscan utility.
- Starball. Excellent pinball game (Falcon enhanced).
- Berzerk. Excellent version of Berzerk (Faster on Falcon).
- FOG issue 7 diskmagazine for Falcon.
- FOG issue 6 diskmagazine for Falcon.

Atari ST/STE/TT/Mega STE Page

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This will contain information and files relevant to all the above mentioned Atari formats, currently this page is divided into the following areas:

News
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In here expect to see any news or previews that come my may, whether they are small descriptions or full features with pictures. At the moment there is:

- Newsletters from HENSA on TOS section of archive.

New Software
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The latest (most recent versions) software available for download. Major revisions to be done with updates. All files now list there by size so you can see how large they are before downloading. At the moment the following software is included, with lots more to come:

- Speed of Light v3.5 (shareware picture viewer).
- ST Zip v2.6. Latest version of ST Zip.
- Obsession demo. 1 level of this great pinball game.

Other Software worth having
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Software worth having on the Atari.
- Utopus. Two player shootem' up (STE only).
- Ozone. Good platform/puzzler.

- Starball. Excellent pinball game.
- Berzerk. Excellent version of Berzerk.

Lynx Page
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All the latest news and reviews on the lynx, along with cheats, etc.
This page is divided in to the following areas:

News
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News on the Lynx and related material. At the moment there is:

- Lynx Summer Steal Deal Extended to the Fall. News of price reductions for a limited period.

Reviews
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Reviews for just about every Lynx game ever released will appear in here. All reviews are by Robert Jung. At the moment the following reviews are included:

APB	Awesome Golf	Baseball Heroes
Batman Returns	Basket Brawl	Bill and Ted's
BlockOut	BattleWheels	Blue Lightning
California Games Challenge	Checkered Flag	Chip's
Crystal Mines II	Dino Olympics	Dirty Larry:Renegade Cop
Dracula the Undead	Double Dragon	Desert Strike
Electro Cop	European Soccer Chal.	Ultimate Chess Chal.
Gauntlet:3rd Encounter	Gordo 106	HardDriven'
Hockey	Hydra	Ishido: Way of Stones
Jimmy Conners' Tennis	Joust	Klax
Kungfood	Lemmings	Lynx Casino
Malibu Bikini Volleyball		Ms.Pac-Man
NFL Football		Ninja Garden
Ninja Garden III : The Ancient Shop of Doom		

Other Lynx Stuff
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Other items of interest to Lynx owners. At the moment there is the following:

- Lynx FAQ
- Lynx Tips and Tricks

New Software Announcement
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Currently empty.

Jaguar Page
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All the latest news and reviews on the lynx, along with cheats, etc.
This page is divided in to the following areas:

News and Preview
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All the latest news and preview information I can find related to the
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Jaguar.

- Jaguar CD Specifications
- Rebellion Development News
- Sinister Developments News
- Sensible Soccer News
- Coming Soon!
- Hand Made Software News

Reviews
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A collection of reviews from different sources, hopefully I will be contributing more to this section myself. Reviews so far include:

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     Cybermorph                          Raiden
          Tempest 2000                        Wolfenstein 3D
          Aliens vs Predator                  Trevor McFur in
Crescent Galaxy
          Brutal Sports Football              Dragon: The Bruce Lee
Story
                              Checkered Flag
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There are many more reviews to come.

Other Jaguar Stuff
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Miscellaneous information on the Jaguar. Information included presently is:

- Jaguar FAQ
- Raiden Tips
- Jaguar Game Cheats
- Kasumi Ninja FAQ
- Ultra Vortex FAQ update for Jaguar

Other Jaguar Pages
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Other pages specific to the Jaguar included in here. Currently there is:

- Atari Jaguar Homepage by Christian Svensson

There are others that will be included, some containing more recent news, but the one above is the most organised and intuitive one I've came across.
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8 Bit Atari Page by Ivo van Poorten
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Not maintained by me these pages cover the 8 bit formats of Atari machines and are very comprehensive. Nearly everything you could hope to find is contained within these pages.

What to expect in the future
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Some structural changes are likely to appear in the next months. I have introduced an announcements page where you can tell the World of anything you have to announce. Please send news of updates to your programs, Atari stuff for sale, and any other Atari announcements here (NOTE: Commercial companies should send information on products to be included in here and in the news sections).

Also coming soon will be a monthly editorial. In this I will try and sum up the month past and to give my opinions on how I saw things for Atari at that time. Hopefully I will be able to look back over many good developments in my pages and summarise them as they happened.

There is an outside possibility of starting a programmers and MIDI section in these pages but this is as yet undecided. I will judge whether or not to do this based on the kind of response I have. I do not want to repeat any of the good work done in these fields however by other Web page writers such as Christer Gustavsson.

More support is needed for the questions and answers pages, although initially successful people just stopped posting their questions. Although the odd one is still coming and answers are still forthcoming. Please support this, it is of benefit to anyone who uses it.

The Jaguar section should have a lot more news, pictures and reviews in the future. I have tracked down a fair bit of news and am in contact with a few companies now and hope to get news from them on their products.

Extra pictures will appear due to my recent access to a colour scanner, enabling me to scan the latest pictures before they exist elsewhere on the Internet. I also hope to slowly get all the maps for AvP into these pages somehow?

Both the ST and Falcon sections should contain much more news in the future, along with more of the best PD/Shareware, and PD/Shareware reviews. I should have several demos hopefully in the near future for games coming out on these formats.

The Lynx section is to continue to get reviews and I will update the news as and when I get it.

Expect more links to Atari related pages in the future, this section will be getting its own dedicated page as over 30 new Atari related links are to be included this month. There will be more newsletters, documents, updates to the FAQ's.

Expect further reviews from Andy and Frank, along with myself (watch out for the Apex Media review). Hopefully I can include more screenshots, and do a few program tutorials. Also Claus J. Pedersen (Stello author), Bob Brodie (former Atari employee) and Steven Davies have all offered to support these pages with contributions in the future.
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Please write with your ideas, criticisms, comments, submissions (software, news, reviews, questions, etc), to me and don't forget that I am now the official maintainer of the Atari FTP list originally by Hallvard Tangeraas. All updates to this list should now be sent to me.

Thank you and see you with the updates to these pages next month!

+ Mark Stephen Smith : msh@dl.ac.uk +
+ Atari Web Pages : http://www.dl.ac.uk/MISC/ATARI/atari.html +
+ Atari FTP List maintainer, Atari Web Page creater and maintainer. +
+ Atari 1040STF, 4Mb Falcon 127Mb HD, Atari Jaguar, Atari Lynx +

(Editor's Note: This column will appear from time to time. Anyone with Internet Access can be a vital source of information and programs for the Mid-Florida Atari Computer Club Newsletter and Library. All submissions are sought and welcomed.)

ATARI 8-BIT DISK OF THE MONTH

*****April 1995****

by Jeff Potter
MFACC 8-Bit Librarian

This month I'd like to present the 8-bit user's dream program. At last someone has managed to port Windows 3.1 to the Atari. With this breakthrough, owners of the 800/XL/XE series will be able to run the programs they've heard about for the 386/486/Pentium processors, with respectable speed, on their unmodified home computers.

Caught you...

I'll have to confess, I had aspirations of writing such an April Fools' article years ago, when Atari Interface (AIM) was still publishing. It would have been a "type-in" article, dozens of pages long. The reader would labor through the arduous task of typing and error-checking line after line of unintelligle code, goaded on by the fantastic descriptions in a long-winded article about Windows ad IBM PC compatibility. If he finally got the program to load, a Windows-like screen would appear, with a pop-up saying "Click here to continue". After clicking, a full-screen "APRIL FOOLS" message would reward his efforts.

Alas, I will spare you the pain of that joke. Since our club president announced our theme would be "Repair", I have collected some programs for the dedicated 8-bitter to use to fix, debug, patch, and otherwise remedy his nonworking hardware and software.
Seriously... Disks can get frotzed by various methods. I remember discovering sector I/O after reading how to talk to the disk without DOS commands or CIO subroutine calls. Eventually I wrote to one wrong sector too many. The next time I saved a file to that disk, portions of it were splattered all over every other file on the disk. I had destroyed the VTOC! Sometime later I found the first program:

VTOCFIX, by Bob Puff

This program, which was distributed on some copies of Bob's MyDOS 4.5, allows you to reconstruct an ailing Volume Table of Contents, or VTOC. The VTOC is a sector (or two) of the disk that describes which sectors of a disk have been used for storing active files. When you delete a file, its contents are still lying around on the disk, but the DOS file management system doesn't know they exist. This is because those sectors have been marked unused, and can be claimed by new files. If you abort a save (like by yanking out the disk), or exit certain programs that have opened a file and not closed it, you run the risk of screwing up the disk's VTOC. If you suspect this has happened, try copying the suspect file to another disk first, then run VTOCFIX on the suspect disk.¢¢What VTOCFIX actually does is search through every file in the directory and trace all sector links. It checks every file in the main directory, and even does subdirectories if you used any (note: not for SpartaDOS). If it finds a bad link, it reports it lets you fix it or not. At the end, it has a reconstructed VTOC, which you can write out to the disk, or merely ignore.¢¢I have used this program several times, especially after I notice that the number of free sectors doesn't add up to what remains. In every case it worked perfectly.

DISKASSM, or the Disk Assembler

This is a powerful program, but dangerous in the wrong hands, so be careful. This lets you examine any sector on the disk, output to printer, optionally disassemble sectors, trace sectors, and even modify bytes by direct sector I/O (but remember my experiences). The ingenious use of custom character sets lets you display all 256 bytes on a DD sector on one screen, in either hex or ATASCII format. If you know what you are doing, you can disable/enable certain early forms of copy protection, or enter patches into pieces of commercial or PD/shareware software that have just a few erroneous bytes. As a bonus, this program works on SSSD and DSDD disks, and even allows you to poke around boot disks (those without DOS or a directory).

UNDELETE.BAS

I culled this from the 8-bit library, and it does what its name implies. If you have just deleted a file from your disk, and haven't yet SAVEd another file, you can undelete it with this program.
Turning to the hardware side of repair, I offer the following:

COLRTUNE.BAS

I wrote this program a short while back, for the old Atari Classics magazine. With my permission, I am including the text of the original article (another easy way to fill up columns in the ol' newsletter

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Your Atari Classic 8-bit computer with GTIA chip can produce an amazing array of 256 colors on a composite color monitor or color television set. But...this is only true if your computer's color output has been properly tuned. Poorly tuned computers may be unable to produce certain colors, or may produce the same color from two different SETCOLOR instructions (which means your missing other colors elsewhere in the spectrum). In my searches for information on the Atari computer I could never locate a good procedure that describes how to properly align the color. Even the Howard W. Sams & Company COMPUTERFACTS manuals only said "...adjust the Color Control...for a blue screen..." Realizing that no two people see blue the same, I came up with my own procedure.

THE COLOR TUNING POT

All 8-bit Ataris have a color tuning pot (potentiometer, or variable resistor) that can be accessed without opening the case. On the 800 it is located along the back side, about 3 1/4" from the left side along the seam between the ribbed top cover and the main body. On the 600XL and 800XL it is located on the bottom of the case, at a point directly beneath the left SHIFT key. On the 130XE it is also on the bottom, but more near the center (directly beneath a point one inch above the "3" key and about two inches to the right of the "ATARI" label). In all cases, you will see a hole not plugged by a phillips head screw or a black rubber foot. You should be able to fit a very narrow (like 5/64") flat screwdriver in this hole and touch the tuning pot. But don't turn it just yet...¢¢Boot up your computer with BASIC installed. Type in SETCOLOR 1,0,0 to get black characters, then type SETCOLOR 2,1,10. Tune your color TV/monitor to produce a clean, bright yellow (about the color of a number 2 pencil) using the HUE or TINT controls. This is the same color my APACVIEW program creates as a reference background. It should not be too orange, or show any signs of green.¢¢Now type in the following BASIC program:

```
5 REM ATARI CLASSICS COLOR TUNING
6 REM UTILITY: ADJUST POT UNTIL
7 REM BEST TRANSITION BETWEEN
GREEN
8 REM AND ORANGE OCCURS IN CENTER
9 REM OF SCREEN.
10 GRAPHICS 11:N=8
20 FOR K=0 TO 79
30 N=N+0.2
40 IF N>15.99 THEN N=1
50 COLOR INT(N)
60 PLOT K,0:DRAWTO K,191
70 NEXT K
80 GOTO 80
```

Like always, save a copy to disk, then type RUN. It should draw a bar pattern of all 15 colors available from the GTIA chip (note black has intentionally been skipped). Just left of center should be a rather sick orange-green color, and just right of center should be a rather pure orange. Now insert the screwdriver in the tuning pot you located earlier, and adjust it carefully.

You should try to match the color just left of center so that it is just a tiny bit greener than the color just right of center. When perfectly tuned, the screen will be a continuum of colors, with no abrupt change at the center, no missing colors, and no duplicate colors. Your tuning pot only goes once around, so don't try to turn it too far left or too far right.

On some Ataris, a metal screwdriver detunes the color circuit, so don't try to make a decision on the colors with the screwdriver inserted. Even though you are poking into your Atari with a metal screwdriver, you stand very little chance of getting shocked: only very low voltages exist inside your computer.

If you follow these simple instructions, your Atari will produce all the colors which it was designed for. Keep the program handy, and "tweak" it up every few months, in case the setting drifts as the parts get older. Good luck!

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RPMTEST2.BAS

If you don't already have one of these, here is a program that reads the disk constantly and displays a little speedometer. This shows you your drives RPMs, and if you can find the

control pot on your drive (ask Bob at this month's meeting), you can interactively tweak it up or down. Remember most drives want 288 RPM; one exception is the XF551 which should be 300 RPM.

That's all I've got this month. As always, I'm open for suggestions on future themes for 8-bit DOMs. Drop me a line on Bob's Inner Core BBS, or write me at:

202 Chestnut Ridge St.
Winter Springs, FL 32708

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(Editor's note: This article was contributed by Jeff Potter, MFACC 8-Bit Librarian)

ATARI 1050 DISK DRIVE REPAIR
Defective Head Park Switches

By D. R. HAULSEE

DESCRIPTION

One possible failure of an ATARI 1050 disk drive that will cause endless boot errors is a failure of the sensor that detects if the read head is parked. This sensor is currently NOT AVAILABLE as a repacement part, but MUST be in working order for the drive to operate. This article will help you to replace it with more commonly available parts.

TOOLS NEEDED

#2 Phillips head screwdriver
#1 Phillips Head screwdriver
30 watt maximum soldering iron
Small flat blade screwdriver
Small needle nose pliers
Epoxy or equivalent glue
Xacto Knife

COVER REMOVAL

Turn the 1050 on its back and remove the 6 phillips head screws. Carefully turn the drive back onto its feet and set it down. Gently lift the back of the cover and slide it forward. The front bezel will come off with it.

DIAGNOSIS

The head assembly slides on tracks and is driven by a stepper motor located to the right of the disk platter. The head assembly has an arm that sticks out to the left. This arm slides into a u shaped sensor when the head is retracted.

Connect power to the drive but do not attach it to the computer. Turn the drive on (do not put a disk in the drive). As the drive powers up it must find the location of the read head. If the head is parked, it will index the head forward until it clears the sensor and then repark it. If the head was not parked, it will retract the head until it is parked.

If the sensor is bad, the head will index forward 1/4 of inch and stop. Every time the drive is turned on the head will index forward. Eventually the head runs out of travel and will bang repeatedly on the forward stop. When connected to a computer, you get a boot error because the drive cannot find the boot sectors.

As a final test, disconnect the J10 connector on the circuit board. Do not pull on the wires!!!!! Use the needle nose pliers. It is the next to last connector on the back left of the circuit board. When the connector is removed, 4 pins will be exposed on the circuit board. Jump the front two pins on the board together and turn on the drive. If everything else is alright the head will begin to retract. As soon as the head begins moving, turn the drive off and remove the jumper. If the head did not move backwards then the problem is in the circuit board or the stepper motor. That is beyond the scope of this article.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SENSOR
The sensor is composed of an infrared LED and an infrared photo transistor. Either one of the pair could be bad. I have not found direct replacements for them, but, a pair made by Radio Shack will work. The LED is part number 276-143A and the receptor is part number 276-145. Please note, these parts are larger than the original parts and will not fit into the existing sensor housing. You will have to fabricate a housing for them.

PROCEDURE

1. Remove the sensor from the drive. The wire tie to the frame must be cut.

2. Cut the sensor from the wires. Orient the plug as it goes in the drive. Place shrink tubing over the wires and then solder the parts to the wires as follows. The order is from front to back.

1st wire-emitter of part 276-145

2nd wire-collector of 276-145

3rd wire-cathode of 276-143A

4th wire-other lead of 276-143A

After soldering, position the shrink tubing over exposed connections and heat it.

3. Plug the J10 connector back into the circuit board.

4. Fabricate a mounting that positions the LED vertically looking down. The mounting must have fore and aft adjustment and position the LED above the arm on the head unit. The arm on the head unit must pass under the LED. Ideally,the photo transistor pair should face each other. Unfortunately, there is not enough room under the arm for thr receptor. By trial and error I discovered that the receptor can be placed on its side. The LED though must shine directly into the receptor.

5. Fabricate a mounting that positions the receptor horizontally looking toward the head mechanism. The mounting must have fore and aft adjustment and allow the arm on the head unit to pass over it. I cut the original housing into pieces and glued the LED and receptor to halves of the mounting. I then used standoffs to set the parts to the correct height.

6. Turn the drive on. As the drive powers up it will position the head over the sensor pair. If the head will not position, check to make sure that the wires are properly connected.

7. Now that the head is being parked, make sure that it is parked in the proper place. As a starting position the back end of the head mechanism should be 3/8 of an inch from the inside boss that holds the arms that the head slides on. If the location is wrong, turn the drive off and move the sensor pair as required. When the drive is turned back on it will repark the head. Continue moving the sensor pair until you get the 3/8 dimension. The sensor pair is only moved with the drive powered off.

8. Connect the drive to the computer and attempt to boot a disk. SPARTADOS is less sensitive to head location than DOS 2.5. If the disk boots, run some programs to check that the drive can read all disk sectors. If the drive can not read all sectors or will not boot then move the sensor pair a little forward or backwards. My two drives both held a dimension of 7/32 of inch on the gap referenced above.

9. Be patient. Eventually you will get the correct gap. Reassemble the drive cover and you are finished.

Supplied by the CHAOS BBS
(517) 371-1106

(This article was contributed to the Newsletter by Jeff Potter, MFACC Librarian. The information contained in the article is complete and accurate. However, the staff of the newsletter, the officers and the Mid-Florida Atari Computer Club cannot recommend the procedure one way or the other.)

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Bill Baker, the National Treasurer says:

IT IS THAT TIME AGAIN: RENEW!!